



**FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

**SPONSOR:** Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

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**PRESENTER:** Same as above

**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** December 8, 2014 for January 13, 2015

**AGENDA ITEM:** Item Number 1

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Proposal for the closure of the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approves the closure of diploma programs and certificate programs as required by the University's Policy on Diploma and Certificate Programs. (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.b.ii*)

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work Faculty Council [for recommendation] (November 25, 2014)
2. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for Approval] (January 13, 2015)**

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The proposal to close the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration received approval from the Faculty Council of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work on November 25, 2014.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal to close the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration. The diploma was developed in 2010 by the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work to provide skills

and knowledge to leaders and managers of social service organizations. Feedback from graduates has been positive. However, student demand for the program has been more limited than anticipated.

The Faculty consulted widely with diploma graduates, faculty members, and within the profession about the diploma. Feedback indicated that a better approach to offering this type of training for working professionals would be as a Continuing Education offering rather than as a stand-alone graduate diploma. It is expected that a Continuing Education format will provide enhanced flexibility for students and will respond to the concerns that were raised by students regarding cost, workload and accessibility of the diploma. A review of the experience of other Schools of Social Work in North America revealed that Continuing Education is the predominate mode of delivering this type of content to working professionals.

The recent review of the Faculty of Social Work endorsed the Faculty's decision to phase out the graduate Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration and develop an appropriate Continuing Education offering.

All 11 students currently in the program will be supported to complete the program and will be able to complete all remaining course work. All current and lapsed students will be informed in writing that the diploma will close as soon as governance is complete. The established closure date of August 31, 2019 will give students sufficient time to complete the program.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The enrolment in the diploma is low. Courses included in the diploma will continue to be available as part of the Master of Social Work Social Service Administration Specialization. Consequently, there will be minimal financial impact.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approves:

THAT the proposed closure of the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration, to which admissions has been suspended, as described in the proposal from the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work dated November 27, 2014, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of August 31, 2019.

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#### **DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

Proposal for the closure of the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration



## Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work Proposal for the Closure of the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration

<b>Closure Proposed:</b>	The Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration (DSSA)
<b>Faculty / Academic Division:</b>	Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
<b>Faculty / Academic Division contact:</b>	Faye Mishna, Dean, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
<b>Program contact:</b>	Wes Shera, Professor & Dean Emeritus, Director Diploma in Social Service Administration (until Jan 1, 2015).
<b>Effective date program will be closed to new admissions:</b>	September 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2014
<b>Effective date of full closure of program:</b>	August 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2019
<b>Version Date:</b>	November 27th, 2014

## 1 Brief Summary

The Advanced (Graduate, Post-Master's) Diploma in Social Service Administration is being phased out. Students currently in the program will be supported to complete their Diploma and all are projected to have completed the program by August 31, 2019. They will have access to the core and elective courses via the MSW Specialization in Social Service Administration.

## 2 Rationale

In response to an identified need in the social service sector for individuals with the skills and knowledge to lead and manage social service agencies, the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work developed a "Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration" and a new specialization within the MSW in Social Service Administration. The first cohort began the Diploma program in September 2010. The intent of this program was to provide a rigorous, comprehensive grounding in the key values, skills and knowledge required by managers and leaders of social service organizations. Applicants were expected to be those who were either currently in, or aspired to be in, management positions within social service organizations in the Province of Ontario. The reaction of those taking the program has been very positive both during the program and after they have completed the program and are back in their respective workplaces. Over 73% indicated, in a recent web-based survey of graduates, that the program had a significant or very significant positive impact on their work.

However, despite the positive response of students who have taken the Diploma, student demand for the program has been limited. The largest continuing challenge has been to get sufficient admissions numbers to warrant the continuation of the program. Some of the factors that have been identified as contributing to this lack of demand are:

- *It is perceived as an expensive program for students*
- *The two-culture dynamic in class (Diploma and MSW Specialization students combined)*
- *Academic course requirements while working full time are challenging*
- *Many potential applicants take continuing education courses*
- *In North America continuing education is the predominate mode of delivering this content*
- *Competition from other programs*
- *Using the term "Diploma" is problematic, typically more connected to college programs*
- *Most agencies no longer provide professional development monies for their staff*
- *Increasing number of agencies providing leadership/management training in-house*
- *Economic recession has had an impact on personal funds available for further education*

The Faculty of Social Work proposes to close the Diploma and is planning to develop continuing education offerings in this area. In addition, the specialization in Social Service Administration will remain for students who wish to pursue a Master of Social Work degree.

### 3 Impact on other programs/units of the proposed closure

This program was primarily designed for social work professionals who wanted to move into positions of leadership in the human services. A few students from OISE and other departments and campuses took some of the courses as electives but the program's closure will not impede these colleagues from taking the same courses in the MSW Social Service Administration Specialization. It is expected that there will be minimal impact on other units and no inter-divisional or inter-institutional agreements or contracts are affected. The closure of the program will allow us to make better use of the resources that have been invested in the development and operation of the Diploma Program elsewhere.

### 4 Student Accommodation

**Table 1: Advanced Diploma (Post-Masters)**

	Year one	Year two	Year three	Year four
<b>Current enrolment</b>	# 3	# 6	# 1	# 1

All students currently in the program will be supported to complete the program. The same core courses will continue to be offered in the MSW Social Service Administration Specialization and the Diploma students will be able to access them. They will also continue to have access to the full range of MSW electives to meet the two credit elective course requirement. To provide sufficient time for students to complete the program (given most are part-time) we have established a deadline of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. No issues of capacity to accommodate completing students are anticipated. The Coordinator of the Specialization in Social Service Administration will work with current Diploma students to ensure that they can complete the program. Students who are lapsed (currently 2) can reactivate but have to complete the program within the five year time limit of the program. As previously indicated, the core courses will continue to be offered within the MSW program. The two lapsed students will be informed, in writing, regarding the scheduled closure of the program and reminded of the five year time limit for completion of the program.

In terms of academic options for students the demand we anticipated for the Diploma program has not been realized. The current Director recently consulted with colleagues at the Annual Meeting of the National Network of Social Work Managers regarding the lack of demand for the program. The major theme emerging from this was that the best method of offering this type of training for working professionals is through Continuing Education rather than a stand-alone post-masters diploma or certificate. We will be working with our Director of Continuing Education to develop some pilot offerings in this area for the 2015-2016 academic year. In terms of our MSW Specialization in Social Service Administration, it is anticipated that the closure of the Diploma (with its minimum work experience requirement) will open the specialization to more of our MSW students who do not meet the current work experience requirement. We are also looking at alternative ways of marketing some of the courses in the SSA Specialization to students in other specializations. This realignment of our

programs is anticipated to increase student participation in the area of social service administration.

In terms of consultation we completed a web-based survey of graduates in May, 2014 which was very helpful in identifying both positive attributes in the program and continuing concerns. Some of the details were provided in the Rationale section (above). The closure proposal and implications for the Social Service Administration Specialization were discussed at the October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MSW Studies Committee. Response to the proposal was positive. An Alumni Advisory Committee has also been formed and on November 27<sup>th</sup> we had a networking meeting of graduates. Part of that meeting was devoted to hearing graduates’ reaction to the proposed phase out. While they expressed disappointment they understood the reasons underlying the decision. The proposal was discussed at the Faculty Council Meeting on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and was passed unanimously. It should also be noted that the recently completed External Review Report of the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (site visit Oct 8-10<sup>th</sup>) for our Faculty, endorsed our decision to phase out the Advanced Diploma in Social Service Administration.

Once all the approvals have been processed the Director of the Diploma Program will notify current and lapsed students in writing about the phase out of the program and the procedures that have been put in place to help them complete the program. List serves will subsequently be used to inform other groups about the phase out of the Diploma, the strengthening of the Specialization and the development of Continuing Education offerings.

## 5 Faculty / Staff Accommodation

Faculty reviewed both the results of the survey of graduates and the data on applications, admissions and graduation at a faculty meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and unanimously supported the phase out of the program. The work required to oversee the planning, implementation and management of the Diploma Program was extensive relative to the number of students in the program. The phase out of the Diploma and the strengthening of the MSW specialization will lead to a more efficient use of resources. The development of Continuing Education courses will demonstrate responsiveness to the community but will be a more cost-effective way of providing training to working professionals in the field of human services.

## 6 Governance Process

	Levels of Approval Required
<b>Decanal / Provostial Sign-Off</b>	
	Faculty/Divisional Council October 21, 2014
<b>Submission to Provost’s Office</b>	November 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
	AP&P(approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no specialist of major; graduate fields or diploma, and collaborative programs)

	Academic Board (approval of degree, graduate program, diploma closures)
	Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, closures)
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to Quality Council</b>	
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to MTCU (in case of closure of degree)</b>	